

James Everett
RELIGION AND LOYALTY INSEPARABLE.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED

AT

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH,

MANCHESTER:

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By C. BAYLEY, D. D.

REGUM TIMENDORUM IN PROPRIOS GREGES,
REGES IN IPSOS IMPERIUM EST JOVIS.

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PROVERBS XXIV. 21, 22.

FEAR THOU THE LORD AND THE KING; AND MEDDLE
NOT WITH THEM THAT ARE GIVEN TO CHANGE.
FOR THEIR CALAMITY SHALL RISE SUDDENLY.

THE wisest of all Kings taught this doctrine, which was dictated by the unerring Spirit of God the great King. But to treat of civil polity in a religious assembly might be deemed improper, were not religion and loyalty inseparable. Questions of jurisprudence and national interest are doubtless discussed with greater propriety in the cabinet or the senate. But when a question arises which affects the right of the magistrate to demand obedience, and the obligation of the subject to yield it; if the precepts of the gospel at all concern our conduct as citizens

citizens, it must be the duty of every christian pastor to point out to his flock what these precepts command, and what they prohibit. As men, our duty is to honour, worship, and obey our Creator, and to live always in his fear. As christians, and as members of a civil or religious community, our duty is to be faithful to the government under which the good providence of God hath placed us. Those who are truly religious will be obedient. "The godly will be quiet in the land." And those who are not loyal, or are so no longer than it is for their interest, are not truly religious: for how can he be true to his God who is false to his Prince.

Innovations either in religion or civil government are to be dreaded; and therefore "meddle not with them who are given to change;" with שוֹנִים *shonim* changelings, which the chaldee translates *fools*, who depart from their duty, and fish in troubled waters. Go not into their secrets, join not with them in their cabals, nor enter into the mystery of their iniquity: for they commonly bring mischief upon themselves before they are aware. "Their calamity shall rise suddenly." Though they carry on their designs with the utmost secrecy, they will be discovered, and brought to punishment, when they little think of it: and who knoweth the time and manner of their ruin.

[In prosecuting this subject, we shall observe that,

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I. The text strongly inculcates the duty of reverence to the magistrate, from the principle of reverence to God. And this is the only principle upon which all the duties of morality can be securely established.

The sacred scriptures unite in such a manner our allegiance to our Sovereign, who under God the great King is the supreme magistrate, and adherence to the constitution, with piety towards God, as shews that there is an intimate connexion between religion and loyalty. And upon this sublime principle the government of England is founded. Religion is reverence and obedience to God, and loyalty is reverence and obedience to the King: the latter is a branch of the former, and both are enforced in the words of the text, "Fear the Lord and the King."

This fear implies our duty to our God and our duty to our King. It is a filial fear, whose characteristic is "to hate evil, pride, and arrogancy," and "to depart from every false way." It is the "beginning of wisdom." It discovers itself in justice, subjection, obedience, honour, and love. It requires

quires its possessors to "pay tribute" or taxes, and to "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." *

The Romans taxed the Jews, who were the elect people of God, without asking their consent; and Jesus Christ did not condemn the taxation, as the advantages of protection and civil order were obtained by it. He unveiled his deity; he searched the depth of the sea, inverted the course of nature, and wrought a miracle to pay his tax: and to whom? to a foreign power; to a heathen prince; to Tiberias, the third of the Cæsars.

When we hear St. Peter say, "Fear God, Honour the King," our minds are instantly struck with the inseparable connexion which subsists between them. Both are enforced under the sanction of the same authority; so that if the King is not honoured by us, we do not fear God. If we are not influenced by

* Matt. 22. 21. However persons disaffected may disturb the minds of the people, by availing themselves of the dearth of the necessaries of life; the poor man pays but a trifling part of the taxes which supports the government that protects him: so small a part that he cannot even feel it, unless he is told of it. The chief article necessary for the nourishment of his body, which is taxed, is his beer.—But what part of his cloathing is taxed, except his shoes and his hat? And he is amply repaid, in that enormous though happy tax entitled the poor-rates.

by the former, we shall not obey the latter. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

This duty to our King is indispenſible. It ariſes from the conſideration that God hath ſet him over us. It is not impoſed upon us merely by the authority of fallible men; but it is the poſitive command of Almighty God. A contrary diſpoſition is inconſiſtent with the faith of a chriſtian, and a violation of theſe expreſs injunctions, "Put them in mind to be ſubject to principalities and powers, to obey magiſtrates—Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves—Let every ſoul be ſubject to the Higher Powers; for here is no power but of God: the Powers that be are ordained of God. Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the ordinance of God; and they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnation." †

I do not contend for the principles of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, when unconstitu-tional and antiſcriptural. But if there be danger of tying too hard the knot of allegiance to the Sovereign, there is far greater danger of making it too looſe. It is a doubt whether reſiſtance can ever be lawful, except when all the horrors and miſeries of a civil war conſequent on reſiſtance, would be leſs terrible than the ſlavery and

† Tit. iii. 1. Heb. xiii. 17. Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

and oppression previously endured, under the then subsisting government.

Would you have a conscience void of offence towards God and man, let your spirit and temper be under the direction of God's Word. It is at your peril to disobey his plain injunctions. The Bible is friendly to order and the public peace, which it will not permit us rashly to infringe; and while our gracious Sovereign governs according to the laws of his country, it requires us at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances, from obedient hearts to God, with loyalty and affection to his Majesty, to pray, "God save the King." †

But who was King, when the apostle enjoined, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." ‡ Was he a pious monarch? a kind and affectionate father of his people? a christian? No. It was Nero, a tyrant, a persecutor, * an inveterate enemy to the christians and to christianity. What! say you, submit to a tyrant,

† Sam. x. 24. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. * Homily on Rebellion.

tyrant, a cruel persecutor! Ought he not rather to be deposed and banished? I answer; did you ever hear or read a word of any such question-being proposed by the primitive christians? Can you produce a single instance of either the apostles or the first christians speaking evil of dignities, or refusing to honour and submit to them, though they were cruelly treated by them? Rather was it not their constant doctrine and practice to "render honour to whom honour is due?" Therefore to render honour and to submit to such a king as Nero, is a death-wound to every objection against the precept in our text, "Fear the Lord and the King."

I must acknowledge I believe that his present Majesty is one of the best Kings that ever sat on the British Throne. But suppose he were not; suppose he were an heathen, like Caligula, Claudius, or Nero, our duty to God is the same. Think on him as you please, yet this dissolves not your obligation to obey the command of God: who has not sent an angel to reign over us, but a man of like passions with ourselves. It is neither your duty nor mine to listen to the language of disaffection, lest we become prejudiced against him. We have faults, and if we look at home and mend them, we shall be better employed. †

Do

Do not object that, " the first christians were in an infantine state, few in number, and weak in power; and therefore it was wise in them to submit; but now the case is altered, we may cast off all submission." Is not this to trifle with the solemn command of a holy, jealous, and sin-avenging God: who orders that "every soul be subject to the Higher Powers?" Would grateful children thus evade the fifth commandment? Would they cast off all duty to their parents because they can help themselves? This would render the word of God of none effect: and sap the foundation of all virtue. But in the second century the christians were numerous and powerful. Thus Tertullian addressed the Guardians of the Roman Empire: " We could make a terrible war upon you without arms. Your cities, islands, forts, towns, assemblies, camps, wards, companies, palace, senate, forum, all swarm with christians. If such a numerous host of christians should but retire from the Empire into some remote region of the world, the loss of so many men, of all ranks and degrees would leave an hideous gap, and a shameful scar upon the government, and the very evacuation would be abundant revenge. You would be at a loss for men to govern, and in the pitiful remains you would find more enemies than citizens; but now you exceed in friends because you exceed in christians

tians. † From the christians nothing hostile ever comes. ‡ We acknowledge the Emperors to be next under God, supreme." ||

" But perhaps our vows and intercessions with heaven for the life of the Emperor are to be looked upon merely as the spices of flattery, and a trick only to elude the severity of the laws. But look into the Word of God, the Word we go by, and which we do not suppress in private ; and there you may see with what superabundant charity, we are commanded to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to "do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us. Matt. v. 44." And who such cruel persecutors of christians, as the Emperors for whom they are persecuted. And yet these are the persons which we are commanded by the Word of God expressly, and by name to pray for ; for thus it runs, "I exhort therefore, that first of all supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, for Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2." * We must therefore be subject for Conscience sake. †

† Tert. ap. c. xxxvii. ‡ c xxx. || c. xxxviii, * c. xxxi.

‡ Rom. xlii. 5.

CONSCIENCE, you say, "makes cowards of us all." And in some sort it holds good. Conscience makes us cowards in every cause which is contrary to the will and command of God. A seared Conscience makes a man worse than a brute, and fit for murder, rapine, and despair. But a good conscience toward God inspires him with the truest courage, the greatest fortitude, and the boldest magnanimity in his service. Therefore the christian cannot, and dares not commence a traitor to his King, or a rebel against his government.

Does the Lord command, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself." What love is due to our King? Even such love as will prevent us from thinking, speaking, or hearing any ill of him. It will guard us against all disloyal reports of him, which may proceed from seditious changelings. Love will restrain us from doing any thing which may grieve his royal heart, or cause the crown to sit heavy on his sacred head. Vain and specious only are all professions of love, honour, and reverence of him, while we entertain groundless suspicions of him, and pursue such steps as tend to disturb his peace or perplex his government. But the enquiry of a heart obedient to God, and of a loving loyal heart to our King will be, "What shall be done to the man whom the KING OF KINGS delighteth to honour?"

Where

Where then is he, who, dazzled with his own self-conceit, says in his heart he will not Fear the Lord nor the King? It is he who, instead of regarding the Word of God, licentiously turns public administration into ridicule: and under pretence of ingenuity and freedom of thought encourages disloyalty, infidelity, and irreligion; and under the idea of liberty is enslaving the soul, defiling the conscience, and banishing from our happy island every thing that is dear to us.

II. We observe secondly, that the text contains a caution against associating with those who are given to change, because of the danger to which they are exposed.

St. Peter delineating the character of changelings, warns us against them in these words: "They walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and *despise government*, presumptuous are they, *self-willed*, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. While they promise others *liberty* they themselves are the servants of corruption." * And St. Jude scruples not to call them, "Filthy dreamers, who defile the flesh, *DESPISE DOMINION*, and *SPEAK EVIL OF DIGNITIES*." † Should such persons assume the name of Patriots, and with the foul breath of slander in-

B. 2

cense

* 2 Pet. ii. 9, 10. † Jude 8.

sense and inflame the minds of the people against our governors in Church and State, our duty is to beware of them, lest we be defiled by them; lest we catch the infectious and spreading poison, and lose our holiness and happiness together.

Living in a land of liberty, let us enjoy the inestimable blessing. And as a constitutional amendment, conducive to the improvement of the body politic, is not prohibited, let the cause of liberty be carried as high and extended as far as the Word of God and a good Conscience authorize. But let it be bounded by these sacred limits. All beyond is abusing it. All beyond is not christian liberty, but licentiousness, the worst kind of tyranny.

The riches of a country are its industry and its virtue. That industry see that you discourage not, and that virtue see that you impair not, by the injudicious encouragement of foreign luxuries. To grecian refinements and asiatic superfluities, Rome may attribute the beginning of its declension. Let us not imitate her folly. Though disappointed ambition should avail itself of the passions of the multitude easily excited, to light the torch of discord, and to "send us forth, like vessels in a storm to shock and sink together," yet, timely admonished, let us neither study innovation nor favour those who do.

The

The balance in a mixed government, like that of Britain, which combines the valuable parts of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, strongly inclines to the popular side. This the artful and designing never fail to turn to their own advantage. Under the popular idea of decrying slavery, they mingle with their eulogies of liberty those sentiments which strike at the tranquillity of society, render the people discontent and refractory, and create in their minds an implacable antipathy against their rulers. Their conduct is exactly that of Absalom. "For when any man," writes the Historian, "that had a controversy, came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him and said, see, thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed of the King to hear thee. O that I were made judge in the land, that every man, who hath any suit or cause, might come unto me, and I would do him justice." 2 Sam. 15. ii. iv. Faction in the State, and Schism in the Church, as one has justly observed, "have ever had a similar language, and ever met with fools enough disposed to receive it. They have found many faults, promised many improvements, and always left matters worse than they found them."

B 8 Embarked

Embarked in the same tempest-tossed vessel, subjects of the same kingdom, and members of the same church, let us embrace every opportunity which our various situations afford us, not of sowing sedition, reviling our rulers, or shewing ourselves enemies to peace—but of strengthening the hands of government, and displaying our patriotism by a disinterested regard for the happiness, honour, and prosperity of our Religion, our King, and our Country. We are the worshippers of the true God, the subjects of the best of Kings, and members of the most privileged Empire. Would you be patriots indeed? and lovers of your country? Promote its happiness, and seek its peace, by extending its commerce, paying a just difference to its laws; and above all, enlarge its felicity by increasing its virtue. We shall then see that religion and loyalty, obedience to God and the King, will operate in a manner which all other means combined will be found insufficient to effectuate.

“Yet we cannot but lament the sorrows of the church, in that indifference for religion which so generally prevails; in the “overflowings of ungodliness,” and of those flagrant crimes against society, which render necessary the presence and interposition of the sage and venerable Judges of the land; in that spirit of animosity and contention which produ

ces vexatious and endless law-suits; in those hatreds which are perpetuated; in that revenge which some of the sons of wickedness esteem honourable; in that disregard of judicial oaths, the last and greatest pledge of veracity; in those infidelities of the marriage bed, the frequency of which seems to have diminished their guilt, and which now excite no horror, no detestation, but rather an indecent levity and laughter; in that spirit of luxury which saps the very foundation of kingdoms, depraves its manners, enervates its vigour, and extinguishes its faith;" in the prevalence of those impious and licentious books which are daily published and circulated among us with contumacious industry; in a criminal passion for vicious liberty; in that spirit of schism and revolt which seems to form itself in the sanctuary; in that contempt of the Gospel and its ministers, which has shewn itself of late in a most remarkable degree; and in those busy sectaries who depart from their duty, destroy the bond of union in the parish, prate against the church, divide the flock, alienate the hearts of the people from the person of their minister, and, which gives him much more concern, from that religious constitution which he believes is one of the greatest blessings of his country. These point out the necessity of attending to our text; as they all originate in the neglect of that obedience which it requires, "Fear the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change."

The

The reason here assigned is important. It exhibits the awful end of these changelings: "Their calamity shall rise suddenly." Who can conceive how sore and how sudden it will be! For they have two potent and terrible enemies; if therefore they will not obey the Lord and the King for conscience sake, as duty binds them, they should do it for their own sake, for fear of those severe punishments which will certainly be inflicted upon rebels. And should they escape the temporal punishment due to them from the King, they will live in shame, with a terrified conscience all their lives; and when they die they cannot avoid the presence of God, whose laws they have broken, and whose Word they have despised. And who can express the horror of those who die in their sins? Who meet with confusion and eternal condemnation in that world of spirits! And if they repent not in time, as most commonly they do not, they cannot escape the gnawing of the worm that dieth not, and of the fire that is not quenched.

Punishment is the due reward of sin; and every sin persisted in must be punished, either in this life or the next: and although the punishments and censures, which the magistrate or the church inflict, have not always their desired and saving effects, yet neither of them should be set aside; for they generally prevent the judgments of God from falling upon the society; and the governors deliver their own souls.

As

As sure as this Gospel is true, so sure it is, that to countenance those who rebel against God and the King, is to be partakers with them in their evil deeds: and such will sooner or later, without bitter repentance, share in their punishments, for "a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

To conclude, If you have no fear of the Lord I have no farther concern with you at present: I doubt, I can do you no good. How can you be good subjects of his majesty, who are not subject to the majesty of heaven. You talk of being true patriots, lovers of your country, while you encourage a vicious independence which spurns at all authority human and divine; you neither Fear the Lord nor the King; but are men of immoral principles, and open enemies to God by wicked works. You talk of having "*new-light*," while you walk in darkness, and are in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, under the power of sin, and condemnation of the righteous judgment of God. If you die in this state, you will be undone for ever.

Suppose you now begin to awake out of sleep, and feel yourself a sinner; you cry to God for mercy; but is it any wonder that you find no answer while you are under the guilt of unrepented sin? Can you expect mercy from God while you disrespect the King, his Vicegerent.

A THANKSGIVING FOR HIS MAJESTY'S RECOVERY,

SUNG AT ST. JAMES'S, MANCHESTER;

April 23, 1789.

1 **W**H^O is so great a God as ours!
 So ready at his creatures' cry!
 So near with his redeeming powers,
 To send deliverance from the sky,
 To turn aside the ills we dread,
 And all our highest hopes exceed.

2 O Thou, who hast, in special grace,
 To us a nursing Father given,
 Still let thy arms of love embrace
 The chosen Delegate of heaven,
 And let him live, to health restor'd,
 The Servant of his dying Lord.

3 The means thy mercy sanctified,
 Thy pity heard our ardent prayers,
 The balmy help thy love supplied
 Hath scatter'd all our griefs and fears;
 And gives our joyful hearts to own
 Thou didst the work, and thou alone.

4 We still will pray, and never cease,
 The prayer to which thou wilt attend,
 'Stablish his soul in perfect peace,
 His days prolong, his Throne defend,
 And seal him thy adopted Son,
 Heir of a never fading Crown.

